

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 30 are presented for examination in the present application upon entry of the instant Preliminary Amendment.

The specification has been amended to include the headings required by the *Manual of Patent Examining Practice* (MPEP) 608.01(a) and an appropriate priority claim. Further, the abstract of the disclosure has been amended to ensure conformance to the requirements of MPEP 608.01(b).

The claims have been amended to conform to U.S. practice. Specifically, claims 1 through 30 have been amended to remove reference numbers, ensure proper verb tense for all method claims, include the transitional phrase “comprising” or “wherein” as appropriate, remove multiple dependencies, and ensure proper antecedent basis for all claim elements. These claim amendments merely make explicit what had been implicit in the claims and, thus, should not affect the scope of equivalents to which the claims are entitled.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for examination. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and passage of this application to allowance. If for any reason the Examiner feels that consultation with Applicants’ attorney would be helpful in the advancement of the prosecution, the Examiner is invited to call the telephone number below for an interview.

Respectfully submitted,



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